1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

But with the return of the young shepherd bridegroom to his sheep this co-operative interest in his sexual relations ends. He may continue to sleep with his bride in privacy for one or two months but if he prolongs this period unduly it represents a clear breach in the solidarity of the family. Sexual intercourse becomes now progressively associated not with the proof of manliness, but with conjugal intimacy and solidarity. And in his attempt to maintain his relations with his family of origin unaltered and intact he uses great care to avoid any demonstration of this kind of interest in his bride. Sarakatsan sleeping arrangements are simple. Velenzas, thick woollen carpet-like blankets, are spread on the ground. The Sarakatsanos removes his shoes and his jacket, and another velenza is placed over him. It is the duty of the young bride to place the heavy enveloping velenzas over each member of the family in turn and then to put out the oil lamp before making her way to her husband's side. It is not generally very long before a concert of snores indicates that the family is asleep and it is then possible for the bride and groom under their heavy covering to exchange silent embraces. Silence, of course, is necessary to avoid discovery but in any case the Sarakatsani believe that speech during intercourse is shameful. At first light the bride is first on her feet to blow the embers on the hearth into a blaze and prepare the coffee. With these conventional arrangements it is possible for the physical solidarity of the family to remain relatively unimpaired, and for the bride and groom to enjoy marital intimacy without directly affronting the sensibilities of the husband's family of origin.

However, there is a further complication. Before his marriage the young shepherd returned from the sheep to spend a night at the family hut perhaps once in every three weeks; then he changed his clothes, had the luxury of a night under cover, and heard the family news and gossip. After his marriage he comes openly to the huts more frequently; but he cannot return more than once in every twelve or thirteen days without feeling some embarrassment that he is showing too much interest in a person who is still an interloper in the family circle, and a sense of shame that his sexual desires and intentions must be very evident. He therefore supplements his fortnightly visits with other clandestine meetings. The bride sleeps near the door,

1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
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and cares for her children. Her role is expressive in that she is a symbol of the mutual love and acceptance which bind the different members of the family to one another. The shepherd husband is often away from his home for days and nights, and if the weather is bad he spends much of this time soaked to the skin and shivering. In these depressing conditions he thinks and talks about little else than dry clothes, hot food, and the fire he will sit by when he returns to his hut. The hearth with its fire situated in the centre of the circular hut and tended by the wife or mother is, in fact and in symbol, the centre of Sarakatsan family life; it gives physical warmth and protection against the spiritual forces of evil. The husband is dependent on his wife for the simple but to him very important attentions which he associates with its light and warmth. In return he seldom interferes in what concerns the work and duties of his wife. In a contingent sense, she is independent in her own sphere of action.

But, ultimately, the authority of the husband over the wife is absolute. A wife must show respect (σεβασμός) to her husband before strangers at all times. If they have to walk together in the village or the town, the wife follows some two or three yards behind him. When visitors are entertained in her hut, the wife never sits and eats with her husband and the guests, but stands erect and motionless ready to attend to the needs of the squatting men. Even in the extended family household husband and wife do not eat together. The men eat first, the women of the household afterwards. No portion of a cooked dish (προσφάτ) is set aside for the women, who must satisfy themselves with whatever is left by the men; this is often very little. The act of eating together implies sharing equally in what is placed upon the one common dish from which the Sarakatsani customarily eat. It indicates in that particular context, a certain equality between those who partake. Only sometimes in the intimacy of the elementary family may the husband, wife, and children sit and eat together. For in this most private situation, the relationship of mutual identification between the members of the elementary family makes them, for that moment, equals in the communion of their common meal.

Indeed, there is a marked difference between the public and private behaviour of a man and his wife towards each other.

585 The Sarakatsáneissas usually so silent in the
521 presence of men, look forward to weddings as
831 their only chances of fun. The talk takes a turn
[362] of hair-raising bawdiness. None of the exciting,
comic, or absurd aspects of sex are left unex-
ploited. Rhymes, anecdotes, and reminiscences
are eagerly repeated and capped, crone mumbles
toothlessly to crone, bantering wives make humor-
ously boastful and teasing comparisons about their
married lives, girls listen wide-eyed and agog.
[152] Fits of laughter punctuate this scandalous chat,
hands are flung in the air in hilarity, faces are
covered in mock shame. All this goes on out of
male earshot, while at a distance their husbands
and fathers and descendants smile indulgently
at this seasonable ribaldry.

585 NIGHTFALL had transformed the scene indoors.
123 Late arrivals and a few indefatigable ones were
[354] still at meat; but the rest, lit now by scattered oil
dips, had lapsed into a semitrance of wine and
song. Our return with Uncle Petro evoked hos-
pitable cries of greeting and invitation, repeated
many times and driven home by a clashing of wine
tumblers, to stay the night, as it was so late; or for
a week, a month, or a year, or forever, to forget
London and take to the huts. Alas, some tiresome
fixture in Alexandroupolis next morning com-
pelled us to leave, so, after manifold farewells, we
climbed the stairs to pay our respects to the bride
in her hushed upper chamber.

The rushlight on a stool cast so dim a light that the group at the end was hard to discern. One of the seated bridesmaids, mown down by her vigil, was fast asleep where she sat; a nudge from her neighbor shook her blinking into line. None of the other tiring women had moved, and the bride had remained frozen for the hours since we had last seen her in the same posture of submission. The faint radiance seemed to have robbed them all of a dimension. Darkly haloed by their own interlocking shadows, they merged with the wall, their black and white figures assuming the aspect of a half-lit fresco, with here and there an earring, a coin, a bracelet, a ring, or a necklace glittering momentarily and dimming again, as the wick rose or fell, like fragments of gilt or isolated gold tesserae in a mosaic. The bride silently bowed in answer to our farewells, miraculously moving among her still hagiographic troop of virgins and martyrs. We tiptoed out.

"Doesn't she ever speak?" I asked Uncle Petro when we were out of doors.

"Not now," he said.

"It's rather sad, during her own wedding."

"Ah! That's the way it is. That's how it should be."

[p. 81-8]

Sikarayia Village

585 By the light of the fires among the huts, the scene out of doors was assuming a Brueghelish aspect. The dancers were still sedately moving in silhouette, a last spitted lamb was turning over a bed of glowing charcoal, and groups of nomads were staggering about arm in arm, filling the night with cries and laughter. Overcome by wine or exhaustion, a few of them lay fast asleep under the branches in disjointed attitudes, as though snipers had laid them low in mid-career. A heroic but unsteady figure, egged on by his companions, was draining, with head and trunk flung back, the last dregs from an immense wicker-cradled demijohn. Empty, it fell to the ground with a thud and rolled away amid cheers. A flaxen-haired boy, bent double against a tree trunk, vomited the day's intake in a somber gush. Chewing and snarling sheep dogs wrangled over bones.

● [354] The huts, vague globes looming out of the night, were now softly lit from within by the glimmer of oil dips and hearths. Deeper still in the darkness, one divined the presence of tethered horses. The singing grew fainter as we reached the railway line.

585 178 "You should have seen the weddings when I was a boy," Barba Petro was saying, as the serpent of lighted train windows grew larger down the valley. "We used to set out on horseback a hundred strong to carry off the bride, firing off our guns as fast as we could load them. *Dang! Dang! Boom! Boom! Dang!* Horses used to be lamed, people wounded, sometimes people actually got killed. Whereas now —"

123 The train had clanked to a standstill beside us. We were aloft once more among the anachronistic fringes and tassels of our Victorian carriage.

"Come to see us up in the mountains, up in the Rhodope!" he shouted as the train began to move. "The plains are no good." He pointed with his crook into the night. "Up in the Rhodope —"

The wheels drowned the rest. The light from the carriage windows flashed down across his dwindling figure at quicker intervals, and the glimmering huts and the fires and the tiny moving silhouettes behind him looked as strange now and as alien to Europe as a nomadic encampment in the steppes of central Asia.

114 WHAT I could not know about these extraordinary people at the time of my visit to Sikarayia, I learned two years ago, when Mrs. Angelica Hadjimichalis' two quarto volumes, *I Sarakatsáni*, appeared. A long lifetime of devotion and study, a great knowledge of the Greek past and Greek art history, and many decades of research and fieldwork among the Sarakatsáns themselves have been

[p. 82-A]

/66 cont./

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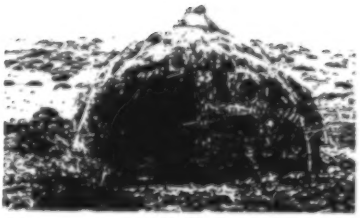

Fig. 50

342 of 30 centimeters, while on the roof long stalks are attached parallel
824 to the tie-beams. With bunches of branches and leaves, and proceeding in the manner described for the round hut, that is to say in tiers, one covers the walls and the roof. In addition, bunches of aquatic plants are spread on the latter.

It often happens that the walls themselves are finished off with a layer of these aquatic materials.

342 While the construction of the round hut provides a single opening
354 that serves as entrance, that of the rectangular hut also provides a window, sometimes even two. Depending on the size of the hut, the opening, 1.30 centimeters high by 80 centimeters wide, is situated /67/ either on the width (in the case of large huts) or on the length (in that of small ones), while the windows are situated either on the side opposite or the side continguous to that of the door.

However, in most cases what we call "windows" are only narrow openings cut into the two small sides of the hut, particularly at the point where the large center forks join the ridge pole. Usually, the

/67 cont./

342

Fig. 51

[354] walls on these sides stop several centimeters below at this point, thus leaving an opening approximately 60 centimeters wide that is never closed (fig. 52).

The door proper is the same type as that of the round hut.

Variations of the two kinds of huts described (fig. 50 and 51):

Variations of the round hut: the diameter of these huts does not exceed 2.50 meters and in general they are from 1.80 to 2.20 meters high.

Their construction is really very simple.

/68/ Long stems, starting from the ground on a circumference marked out in advance, join at the ridge thus forming the vertical part of the frame, the general appearance of which reminds us of a wicker beehive.

Horizontal lacings attached to the vertical components spaced at intervals from the ground to the top, in the manner previously described. An opening permitting entry is always provided; it is closed by a door made either of branches, boards or a cloth.

/68 cont./

342 (324) Of course, the whole /hut/ is covered with branches, leaves or bushes. Sometimes the part of the hut forming the top is covered with aquatic plants, as in the preceding cases.

As far as the use of these huts is concerned, it should be mentioned that the largest ones may be used for living quarters as well as temporary occupancy particularly for shepherds roaming far from the encampment.

343 The smaller ones serve as outbuildings of the principal dwelling, either as storerooms, sheds, or small storehouses for blankets and provisions (grain, flour, oil), or as a shelter for the loom (fig. 50, 51).

342 (354)

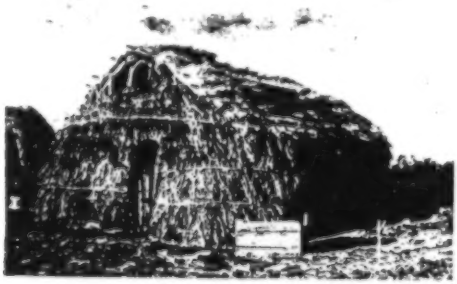

Fig. 52

/69/ /figs. 53 and 54 appear here/

/70/ Variations of the rectangular hut: the variant of the rectangular hut is relatively of a simpler construction than that of the large rectangular hut itself. But here it is necessary to make a distinction.

These variants built either with forks or without forks.

/72 cont./
343 417 as outbuildings of the Sarakatsani dwelling, there are still others, such as:

a) The frétzato.

b) The oven.

c) The chicken coop.

/73/ / Figs. 57 and 58 appear here/ A A

417 /74/ a) The frétzato looks like an enclosure; it is built with slanting posts intertwined with long horizontal stalks. Its walls are overlaid with branches and dry shrubs, likewise intertwined.

There are two types of this construction among the Sarakatsani:

[343] [354]

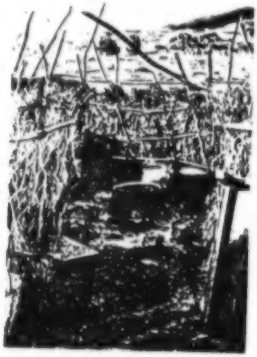

Fig. 59

The first which may be characterized as a frétzato leaning against the hut forms part of the hut (whether round or slanting), for it flanks the front. It consists of a sort of dry hedge in the shape of an ellipse broken on two sides in the middle section.

*,(Sc. p.80--Analyst)

/79 cont./

352 Often, a row of benches almost the same height and some 50 centimeters wide, called "the beds," is added to the low wall. These benches which run the length of the low wall and complete it, are made of small forks set vertically in the ground; interlaced twigs and branches laid on these form the servicable horizontal surface (fig.63).

354 In the round hut the hearth is placed in a definite spot which often, but not necessarily, coincides with the center of the hut.

On the other hand, in the rectangular hut the hearth is situated on that side of the two forks sustaining the rafters which is nearest the entrance.

/80/ In all these cases the hearth is more or less perfectly round in shape. The foundation consists of a series of rough stand flags set side by side and held in place with mud. The part of the hearth turned toward the entrance always has a border of a low wall of an equal mixture of earth and pebbles, from 35 to 40 centimeters

354
352

Fig. 64

/80 cont./

354 high and approximately 20 centimeters thick, meant to protect the hearth against drafts and to facilitate the process of cooking of which we shall speak farther on (fig. 64).

Any kind of chimney is unknown.

342 Moreover, there are no divisions inside a Sarakatsani dwelling.

352 At the left of the entrance and 1.50 meters from the ground one sees two /81/ shelves of wood, one above the other. With very rare [342] exceptions these shelves are typically placed to the left of the entrance since, in most cases, the door opens inward; thus it is only in the opposite case that they are placed on the right. (fig. 65)

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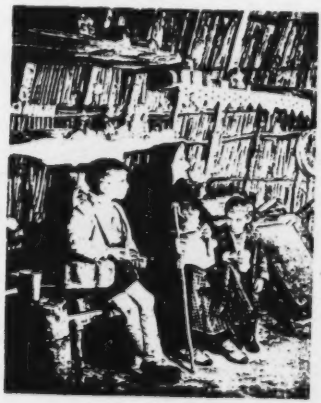

Fig. 66

/81 cont./

343 With respect to the arrangement of the various huts not intended for dwellings we may state in general:

1st that they have no hearth.

2nd that their floor is not coated with the mixture of mud and straw described above, and that they do not have an inside wall.

[362] 3rd that some are equipped with "beds" (benches).

343 417 The /interior/ arrangement of the frétzato varies according to the use for which it is intended. We have already distinguished between the frétzato attached to the hut and the free-standing frétzato, the latter occuring either as /82/ a round frétzato or a rectangular frétzato.

[354] [352] In the center of the fretzato attached to the hut there is a hearth similar to the one we have already described. Likewise, "beds" run along the ellipsoidal walls.

The earth of the "tsardhaki"--whether it is part of a fretzato or stands alone--is always overlaid with a dry covering of interlaced twigs of boughs supported by very short forks (according to the customary procedure), which constitutes kind of floor.

[354] In the round, free-standing frétzato (the photoghoni) there is nothing but the center hearth (fig. 59).

343 [252] Save for the mode of construction, the interior of the oven is not unusual in any way.

[235] Lastly, the floor of the chicken coop has straw scattered on it and, where the size permits, perches are fastened to the walls.

343 233 417 Buildings intended for animals.

In connection with the study of the variations of the hut we indicated that some of the huts are also for the care of the animals.

Nevertheless, this use, being, as it were, merely supplementary, attention should be focussed on the structures intended exclusively for the livestock. Now, the latter may be divided into shelters and buildings used for work with the flocks.

[See p.84--Analyst]

/95 cont./

232 [432] sold to livestock dealers. The sterile ewes are also sold.

With she-goats and kids the procedure is the same.

[232] Moreover, castration of a small number of male animals intended for consumption is also practiced.

/96/ METHODS OF UTILIZATION AND CONSUMPTION

121 Some goods obtained are at times directly usable or consumable without the necessity of supplementary intervention. There are others which must first be submitted either to preparation, improvement or transformation. For still others a few some arrangements suffice.

The concrete study of the different items classified according to corresponding needs will show us what, among the Sarakatsani are the various forms of intervention in question.

342 The Dwelling and the Buildings Intended for the Animals.

The huts described serve, as we have seen, primarily for dwelling. The arrangements made to this end are the following:

352 353 The small wall which protects the interior from rainwater also serves as a shelf /piece of furniture of support/. Household articles and especially blankets and rugs belonging to the family are placed upon it (fig. 62). [513] Piled one on top of another all around the hut and covered by those which are considered the most beautiful in design or color, the blankets are always at the disposal of the occupants and thus become part of the decor of the hut.

The "beds," also described above, which line the wall and finish it off are used chiefly to hold sacks, cooking pots, etc. (fig.63).

354 The fire is always burning in the hut. It is where the family prepare their meals and gather round to eat, warm themselves and sleep.

The smoke escapes to the outside through the boughs and leaves of the roof (fig. 76). It is true that when the fire is kindled the smoke rises and accumulates under the roof before being emitted, so that in practice one does not feel it below a height of 1.50 meters from the ground. And the Sarakatsani say that, on principle, "everybody must be

[Fig. 62 appears on p.91--Analyst]

/96 cont./

354 seated during the kindling." Once the wood has taken hold, smoke accumulation is no longer to be feared, for the heated air rises and escapes slowly to the outside through the roof boughs.

342 /97/ Each hut is a single unit which is used at one and the same
182 time as sleeping quarters, dining room, kitchen, finally as workroom
592 for small tasks. Thus, the entire family life unfolds communally in the presence of all.

513 In the evening everybody, men, women, children, newly married couples, etc., lie down on the ground all around the hearth, their

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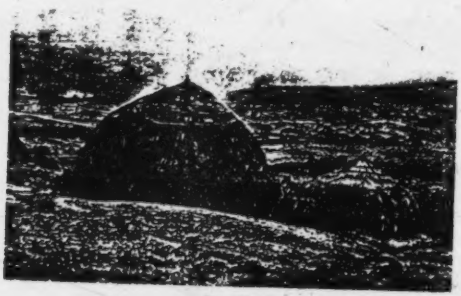

Fig. 76

513 heads toward the periphery of the hut. The floor is covered with rugs
[352] and outspread blankets. Moreover, no one undresses for sleeping. The rugs always remain spread out on the ground which is almost completely covered by them and is practically not visible.

352 At the left of the entrance there are two shelves on which utensils
353 and dishes can be set. (fig. 65).

On the right side of the entrance a place is reserved for sacks containing food provisions (grains, flour, etc.), as well as a small tub full of water.

[Fig. 65 appears on p.93--Analyst]

/119 cont./
(small goatskin bottle).

c) Wine.

d) Finally, spirits. Bought commercially, the last two are hardly ever drunk except at religious or family festivals and above all when hospitality is offered.

--Natural beverages: these are fresh water and milk.

--Infusions: coffee is the drink preferred by the Sarakatsani at any rate in the huts, since tea or chocolate are unknown. In addition, one can enumerate a whole list of infusions made with herbs, flowers and leaves of aromatic shrubs, as for example witch hazel flowers, sage or the various medicinal plants.

In the way of "consumption technology" the drinking of liquids, when it is collective (water, wine) requires containers with a narrow opening the "voutseli" (fig. 11)[A] which are passed from hand to hand; for individual consumption, cups made in the native crafts or bought commercially are used.

Light and heat.

Figure 64[B] shows the solution of these two problems.

For light the Sarakatsani use an oil lamp provided with a wick, which is obtained commercially.

As for heat, the fire of the hearth is quite sufficient. According to our own experience, though it was snowing outside, within the hut it was so warm that a jacket was unbearable.

Sometimes the fire, if bundles of resinous branches are thrown on it, serves also as the only source of light.

****

Although with this last paragraph, the description of Sarakatsani technology may be considered concluded, this is not to say that the study of "the technological expression" of this society is entirely exhausted. We ought to have gone on to a detailed and complete analysis of the succession of procedural steps that "homo faber saractsanus" /Sarakatsani man, the maker/ applies in each /120/ craft. This task

A./Fig. 11 appears on p.43--Analyst/
B./Fig. 64 appears on p.92--Analyst/